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Center News

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CENTER NEWS

In addition to its usual activities, the Center and WCL have recently hosted a plethora of conferences, lectures, and panel discussions.

In January, the War Crimes Research Office hosted a guest lecturer by Purdue University's Professor Charles Ingrao. The subject of his lecture was **History & the Two Holocausts: The Case for a War Crimes Trial**. Professor Ingrao presented a historical perspective on why international war crimes trials are essential for a secure and lasting peace in the former Yugoslavia.

At the winter commencement ceremony for American University and WCL in January, Oxford University Professor Michael Aris accepted an honorary degree on behalf of his wife, the Burmese democracy leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Reading an address from his wife, Professor Aris urged the graduates to discourage involvement by corporate America with the military regime of Burma.

Also in January, the Honorable Hans Corell, Under-Secretary of Legal Affairs to the UN, lectured on **Emerging Legal Issues Facing the United Nations**. He spoke about the successful establishment of the ICTY and the need to develop an international criminal court. He also discussed the reform policy that the UN will be engaged in over the coming months and highlighted the complex nature of UN work, particularly in the field of peacekeeping.

The National Lawyers' Guild of the District of Columbia and the WCL LL.M. Board sponsored a luncheon presentation on the state repression of the student movement of Guatemala. The presentation's focus was on the extrajudicial execution of Aliota Lopez Sanchez, a Guatemalan law student. Guest speakers Gustavo Vasquez Peralta, Elixto Torres, and Jessica Samora, former members of the Association of Law Students of the San Carlos University, spoke about the student movement in Guatemala and their efforts to bring the Lopez Sanchez case before the Inter-American Court.

In February, a lunch discussion on the topic **Rebuilding Economies After the War** was held with speaker John Ryle, a British journalist and humanitarian aid worker who informally dis-

cussed how economies rebuild themselves, especially at the micro and village levels, following armed conflict. Mr. Ryle recently returned from rural Angola, where he examined village economies.

American University's Center for the Global South and WCL's International Legal Studies Program sponsored a conference in March, **The United Nations — From Promises to Performance**, to examine the impact of the UN world conferences of the past decade. Speakers included the Secretary-Generals of most of the world conferences and many representatives of the academic and diplomatic communities.

The WCL International Legal Studies Program, Human Rights Watch/Asia, and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights are sponsoring a conference entitled, **Hong Kong: Preserving Human Rights and the Rule of Law**. The two day program consists of panel discussions on law and business issues after Hong Kong reverts to Chinese control in July 1997, and will include a live video hookup with the City University of Hong Kong. Panelists will include several members of U.S. Congress and members of the Hong Kong Legislative Council.

Inter-American Human Rights Moot Court Competition

Preparations for the second annual Inter-American Human Rights Moot Court Competition are moving along smoothly. The competition, which will be held at WCL May 19-24, 1997, is unique because it is the only bilingual moot court competition of its kind, dealing with the jurisprudence and procedures of the Inter-American System of Human Rights. This year's hypothetical case centers on the issue of violence against women in the Inter-American System.

A number of teams have already registered for the competition. We anticipate that up to 40 teams from throughout the hemisphere will participate. Over 50 distinguished members of the Inter-American human rights field are expected to volunteer as judges for the May competition, and His Excellency, the President of Honduras, Carlos Roberto Reina Idiáquez, will be presid-

ing over the Honor Panel of Judges for the final round. President Reina is known throughout the hemisphere for his work in the defense and promotion of human rights, as well as his contributions as judge (1981-85) and President (1981-83) of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in San José, Costa Rica.

In addition to the competition, students will participate in a day-long seminar on issues related to the Inter-American System. The seminar includes visits to agencies of the U.S. government and various diplomatic missions. During the competition, the participants also have the opportunity to visit both intergovernmental and non-governmental international institutions headquartered in Washington, D.C.

For more information on the competition, contact Robert Guitteau, Executive Director of the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, or Jennifer Morris, 1997 Moot Court Coordinator, at the Washington College of Law, American University, 4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20016. Tel: (202) 274-4180. Fax: (202) 274-4130. E-mail: humlaw@wcl.american.edu. Internet: <http://www.wcl.american.edu/pub/humright/home.htm>.

Mental Disability Rights International

In February, MDRI conducted a fact-finding mission to Romania to study the conditions of children and adults with mental disabilities in orphanages and long-term psychiatric facilities. In April, it will host "International Disability Rights Advocacy," a symposium on international collaboration to promote the rights of people with mental disabilities, which will feature the U.S. release of MDRI's latest report "Human Rights & Mental Health: Hungary" (*see related article in Fall 1996 issue*). MDRI staff and leaders in the disability rights field from the United States and Hungary will discuss the findings and impact of the MDRI report and its implications for the future of international collaboration on mental disability rights advocacy.

The Hungary report has instituted a new initiative for mental health reform in Hungary and will be featured in the Journal of the Hungarian Psychiatric Association, *Psychiatria Hungarica*. ☉